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# THE McGILLIAD

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## Perils and Pitfalls of College Journalism

*Stephen Leacock*

## Virus and Antidote

*Stanley K. Lunn*

## The Importance of Logic

*C. W. Hendel*

## He Aint Gonna — A Short Story

*K. N. Cameron*

[15 CENTS A COPY]

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## CONTENTS

Editorial .....	3
Perils and Pitfalls of College Journalism .....	4
He Ain't Gonna—K. N. Cameron .....	4
Sent with Some Flowers—Henry Donald .....	4
Virus and Antidote—Stanley K. Lunn .....	5
Poems:—Thaw—Leo Kennedy Falstaff Orders—Abraham M. Klein .....	7
Tabula Rasa .....	8
The Importance of Logis—C. W. Hendel .....	9
In Praise of Illusions—J. A. Edmison .....	12

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## EDITORIAL

N SPITE of what people may say to the contrary, in spite of even the arguments which they may append to their statement, we strongly maintain that university students do think. We may perhaps, upon pressure, admit that only a small number indulges in this rather precarious pastime; but even then our contention remains unrefuted. For thinking,—deep, analytical, critical thought,—will, we are convinced, always be the pursuit of only a few. Education, even university education, may augment the number, but it can never substantially alter the proportion.

This is not an indictment against education. It is merely a recognition of a regrettable but unalterable condition. We believe that this has been the state in the past, we think that this will be the state in the future, and hence we are not discouraged with the present. There is on our own campus a large number of students to whom life is more than a mere procession of collegiate Beau Brummels and Greta Garbos, to whom attendance at the gridiron or at the dance hall is merely a recreational pastime and not an all-absorbing concern. There are undoubtedly some in whom the ominous rumbling of our social life, the disturbing upheavals in our political world, and the doubting scepticisms of our speculative philosophies have awakened intellectual curiosity and sympathetic interest. There are those to whom forests are more than potential timber, and rapids more than potential water-power; to whom the vicissitudes and pleasures of life present fields for interesting investigation, and engrossing analyses. These feel the need for some forum where they can exchange their intellectual and emotional experiences, where they can present to their fellow-beings their clarified conception of some bewildering phenomenon or some haunting passion. And it is to fill this need that the "McGilliad" makes its appearance.

We, at the university, are both at an advantage and at a disadvantage. It is true that we are not in such poignant contact with realities as are those who have already stepped

into the actual fighting arena. But it is equally true that this distance gives us a more objective perspective of conditions and events; our observation is more unbiased, and our criticism devoid of so much self-interested prejudice. We can occupy ourselves with theoretical dissections which will give us a basis for future pragmatic applications. We, at the university, have learned the great value of pure science, and of unadulterated speculation as a means of clarifying the atmosphere, and of eliminating traditional misconceptions.

A little consideration of the above rambling and inadequate remarks will clearly demonstrate the great value of such a publication as the present. We ask professors and students of all faculties to cooperate with us, and we are certain that the periodical will do justice to our university, and will prove a useful organ of intelligent opinion and criticism.

The editorial policy is simply that there be no policy. It is the desire of the editorial board to make this magazine a representative university publication. There are in our midst conservatives, liberals, and labourites, idolators and iconoclasts, traditionalists and ultra-modernists, religious adherents and religious sceptics, idealists and materialists, patriots and cosmopolites. Every opinion and class is represented in our university population, and every opinion and class will obtain equal and unprejudiced consideration from the editors. All that the editorial board requires of a contribution is that it have literary excellence, and be devoid of any wilful offensiveness. There is nothing we should welcome more than to have side by side articles of divergent views and of diametrically opposite opinions:

It is obvious from the above statement that the editorial board can never be responsible for any opinion expressed in the pages of the "McGilliad." The editors intend to introduce as little censorship as possible, and desire this to be clearly understood by all concerned.

# Perils and Pitfalls of College Journalism

By Stephen Leacock

 HAVE BEEN one of those who have been the first to extend to the proposed Arts Magazine an enthusiastic, I might say, an exuberant welcome. College Journalism has always seemed to me one of the best things in college life,—one of the most interesting, one of the most useful.

In every good circus the side-shows excell in interest the attractions of the main tent. So it is with college. College journalism, amateur acting, college dances and college sports are more interesting,—I say it fearless of contradiction,—than many of the college lectures. But of these activities, one at least, college journalism, is more useful, if rightly undertaken, than half a dozen lecture courses.

But having said that much of the advantages of being occupied with a college magazine, let me also sound a warning as to its potential dangers. So absorbing a pursuit must not be allowed to dominate the mind in an exclusive fashion. If it does so, serious consequences may ensue.

It is always well to point a moral by introducing actual individual cases as terrible examples. It supplies what is called in the newer language of newspapers and syndicates, the "personal touch". Without this all writing sinks into the class of high-brow moralizing. It was my good fortune to be associated with college newspapers from my school-days up. In my last year at the University of Toronto I was appointed to be one of the Editors of the literary weekly then called *The Varsity*. I realised in time the danger involved in such flattering and fascinating work. I had the good sense to resign before the year was half through.

But others, my associates, were not so shrewd. It is no exaggeration to say that college journalism turned aside and warped their careers from what they might have been.

Among my colleagues was a boy called G. Howard Ferguson, a bright, innocent young fellow from Kemptville, Ontario. Up to that time he had kept his mind keen to a razor edge with the study of economics and philosophy. He read easily. I have often seen him sit over Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, to others a difficult book, roaring with laughter.

Unconscious of what we were doing, we gave to Howard Ferguson the position of "manager". It was a fatal mistake. From that time on the boy seemed to change; a restless activity took hold of him: he attended meetings, made speeches, and was heard to speak of German philosophy as "bunk". It was an open secret that Howard Ferguson's name was mentioned for a lectureship in Comparative Etymology, a position that he might have held till today. But he had grown too restless. After a feverish year or so at law, he sank into the Ontario legislature. The rest

everybody knows. But I have always maintained that Howard Ferguson had real ability.

Then there was Charlie Mitchell. In spite of all that has been said about General Mitchell since they made him Head of the School of Applied Science, I can only say that I never knew a straighter, decent boy than Charlie up to the end of his third year at college, and for a month or so into his fourth. It was then that he became one of the Corresponding Editors of *The Varsity*. This position seems to have dazzled him. I noticed the change in him for the first time on the day when we all went as Editors to have our picture taken: it was all I could do, with Ferguson's help, to shove Charlie behind us into the back line. Another good student had been lost. I have that picture still on the wall of my study,—Howard Ferguson, Charlie Mitchell and the rest. Among them stood "Doc" McLay, the present head of the Arts Faculty of McMaster University; he *really* could have succeeded. The fellow had a genuine gift. And Judge Stuart, too, on the left of the picture; college journalism literally ruined him; it bred in him a restless wandering that led him into the west, and settled him in Calgary. The moralist might say that it served him right, but the fault lay surely with college journalism. Stuart died a few years ago as a Judge of the Supreme Court of Alberta, a wasted life.

Compensations of course there were. I must not exaggerate the case. It was certainly gratifying to us all as editors to be able to lord it over the other students, to reject their feeble attempts at composition, to tell them just what we thought of them.

There was, I recollect a young freshman named William Lyon Mackenzie King who sent us in a poem. The boy's name somehow has stuck in my mind all these years. He sent us in a poem called, *Why I like the Winter* or *The Futility of Human Greatness*. I remember that Doc McLay said it was one of the worst poems we had received that week. We sent it back to King with a smart rebuke as a warning. Perhaps we were wrong. Without our rebuke King might be an established poet today. As it was he abandoned literature. Nor did I ever hear that he ever had any career beyond a little temporary employment at Ottawa.

\* \* \*

There: I needn't labour the point, even if it is an allegory.

All that I want to say is that every time you start a literary journal in a college, all the brightest and best students will flock to its service,—in fact just like my friends and myself.

# He Aint Gonna

*A Short Story by K. N. Cameron*

**S**O I SAYS to myself he aint gonna get away with that no more. Ive stood all Im goin to. If he thinks he can get away with that any more hes crazy. He aint gonna beat my Jim no more I said.

I didnt mind him beating me up so much mind you. I didnt mind that so much. I got kinda used to that. But when he started in on my Jim well that was too much. Jim never done nothing to him. Dont you think hes your son I says to him. Dont you think hes your son. How the Hell do I know says he. How the Hell.

It all started when he comes home one Saturday night drunk as a pig as usual and makes for the cellar stairs like he allus used to to get another shot o gin afore he comes to bed and Jim had put his roller skates on the top step. On the side they was. No one coulda fell on them. But he saw them he did. He always saw everything when he was drunk. His brain I guess never got drunk. Well he picks em up and slams em at the wall and busts a pitcher—the nice one with the cows we got from my ol man when we was married. We was married out in Calgary. I dunno what we come east for. I never wanted to come east. I allus wuz against it. Bill I said Bill lets stay here. But Bill wanted to. More chance he said. He was different in those days. Well he busts the pitcher an yells like a devil or somethin where the hells that brat. Wheres that damn brat he yells. And he comes an beats him with me holdin onto him an yellin an pullin him. I aint goin to stand that no more I says. He aint gonna beat my Jim no more.

And then the same thing happens again the next Saturday night. I dunno how the skates got there. I tol Jim not to do it. Any how I was all ready to leave and had got the things halfpacked cause I wasnt goin to stand any more of that. Then it all happened again an he beats Jim somethin awful and he beats me too.

I was just goin to sneak off quietlike with Jim and go to Toronto an get a job cleanin there but then I guess I was pretty mad and I thought you big b—— Ill give you all you want. By God Ill give it him I thought. Ill kill him by God. I thought about it all week but I didnt let him know what I was thinkin. I was pretty clever that way I guess. I got his breakfast an everythin the same as usual but all the time I wuz thinking how I could kill him and I got a pretty good plan all worked out. Jim an me was all packed to leave Saturday. He got his pay Saturday an we never saw him after the morning. So I got the two skates and put them both together about three stairs down just where he wouldnt look for them and I thought by God if you dont break your neck at that you must have the devil inside you cause I had dragged up the big iron clothes wringer and put it at the bottom where he would hit it sure. It wuz one of them big olfashioned ones all iron ex-

cept the rollers. By God that should finish him I said yes by God.

So I waits upstairs in the dark with Jim all dressed an ready to go. Jim didnt know nothin was going to happen. Well he comes in about one. I heard him swearin tryin to get his key in and then he hits his leg on a chair or somethin and swears some more. And then I heard him gropin for the stairs. I was pretty scared. I knew they couldnt get me for murder. I was too clever for that. But I felt scared all the same. Then I hears hin fall and scream an it was all silent an dark an I got more scared than ever. After a bit I creeps to the stairs an listens but I couldnt hear nothin. So I gets a lamp—cause Bill drunk all the money and spent it on whores an our light was cut off cause we couldnt pay for it. There he was lying there lookin very white an still an a lot o blood on his head. I could see by the way he was lyin he had bust an arm. Then just as I was goin to see if he wuz dead he starts to groan. I felt kinda glad somehow. I dont know why. So I rubbed his head with the corner of my skirt. It wasnt cut much. I guess he just missed the wringer. Anyhow when he comes to the first thin he says is wheres that kid. Christ Ill kill that kid. He come to awful quick and it scared me terrible. He lay there with his big drunken eyes an white face lookin at me. Wheres that kid he says. Then he looks at me an says by God Ill kill you too Ill kill the both of you by God I will. So I jumps up an he makes a grab at me as I goes up the stairs but he was pretty weak I guess cause I got away all right. I locked the door at the top and got Jim and the bags. The por kid was scared stiff. And just before we went he began hammerin on the door an cryin to me. Meg he cries for Christ sake open the door. Meg, my arms bust he cries. But I didnt say nothin but opened the front-door quietly with Jim and went out. Im kinda glad I didnt kill him though. I dunno why. Glad it was only his arm was bust. Yeh I guess Im glad.

## *Sent With Some Flowers*

Go little speechless messengers and take  
With your sweet smell a message to my girl.  
Tell her about the snow that, flake by flake,  
Falls in a dull and melancholy whirl,  
But that I still see sunshine through the mist  
Changing the grey to gold and amethyst.

And should you chance to miss the winding way,  
And should strange eyes behold you with a gaze  
That has forgotten love's brief holiday  
And looks not as it looked in other days,  
Yet tell her what I have been telling you,  
Or say I love her—maybe that will do.

Henry Donald.

# Virus and Antidote

By Stanley K. Lunn

**D**OES LITERATURE exist by itself, because of itself, and for itself, or by the professors, because of the professors, and for the professors? Ostensibly the former is the ideal: literature is taught at the university because it is regarded as necessary to the cultured enjoyment of life. Actually the latter is the insinuation: literature, so the creed goes, may be the only God, but, what is more important, the professor is its prophet. Without Mohammed Allah is nowhere. Perhaps the young professor is permitted a few sentimental vapourings, filled with such cant epithets as 'sublimity', 'truth in beauty dyed', 'expression of the human spirit', 'criticism of life', and so on and so on. But as he increases in years and erudition, the sentimentality of his lectures evaporates, leaving only a small sediment of catch-words adapted to the ear of the maudlin Honours student, or, if he is a man of strict sincerity of intellect, disappears altogether. Inevitably, however, he becomes more and more insistent upon literature's ponderosity and oligarchical exclusiveness, and less and less inclined to admit that the neophyte can breathe the sacred incense as sensitively as the archbishop. Circumvallated by the monotony and narrowness of the academic existence, he forgets the universality of literature: bowed by the toil of the research spade, he forgets in contemplating the intricacies of the roots, that the tree above him is fair for all to see. The historical study of literature comes to mean more to him than the keen joy of prose or the rapture of verse; and yet he superstitiously maintains that these are to be gained only by means of the former, and that their pure serene is breathed at its most exquisite only within the sacred sanctuary of the Ph.D.

It would be an instance of unbelievable rashness or perverted vision to refuse to recognize the great benefits conferred by the laborious study of letters. Still we cannot help feeling thankful that the proclamations of supremacy from the Eternal City of Pedantry are necessarily no more binding than the Papal Line of Demarcation. But the menace extends farther than this. These annunciations may have little influence save among the annunciations, but if their principle cannot be promulgated as dogma, it can be and is spread by means of a subtle infection—I mean by the virus of a literary education. Combined with the presumption of religious authority, is the scientific effectiveness of a clinic: and where the bull is impotent, the literary toxin injected by the Academic hypodermic needle is pregnant of result. Upon a few the injection is successful, and they become addicts of the PhD.; upon others more fortunate, it has the effect of inoculation, rendering them secure from the contagion; but upon the great majority the vaccination has such a drastic effect, that, if it immunifies them in this case, it antagonizes them at the same

time against the entire pharmaceutics of literature. And it is concerning the creation of this latter class at McGill that I wish to write.

The young man who matriculates from High School and comes up to McGill is a queer compound of vague dreams and ignorance. In his amorphous mental make-up, literature is represented by a few selections from the very best in Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Tennyson, and Browning, and a thorough textual knowledge of one play of Shakespeare's. About these writers themselves and their work in general he knows practically nothing, and he certainly has not dreamt of regarding literature in an historical perspective. If not wildly enthusiastic about them, he has at least been struck by the things he has read, and is mildly interested in exploring what lies beyond. His outside reading in most cases has not been extensive. At its best it has consisted of Stevenson, Dickens, Scott, and Kingsley, and at its worst of Lytton, Henty, and Rider Haggard. Even the large number to whom this does not apply, whose enthusiasm has led them beyond these bounds, have seldom read anything more than a few of the other well-known nineteenth century novelists to be found in every circulating library. Apart from the little studied in school, poetry is literally a closed book to him; and prose style means nothing more than syntax and a composition every two weeks. And yet he is not blissful in his ignorance. From things stumbled upon in his scanty reading, from remarks dropped by teachers or parents, he has vague, uneasy admonitions that he is moving in the midst of a vast abyss, that he is surrounded on all sides by the 'palpable obscure'. At such moments he is filled, as one who is crossing a bog, with a quaking uncertainty, and a desperate desire to feel something solid under his feet. Bounded in a nut-shell, he is disconcerted by a half-intuitive realization of the vast world of literature on all sides of him.

Not unnaturally, therefore, he comes to the university, expecting to find the nut-cracker of his dreams. Even if his interests are not literary, he desires to gain at least some understanding of that branch of the human struggle after the ideal which makes its appeal to everyone possessed of the power to read. To meet this very expedient, a special machine has been installed in our educational factory for his exclusive use, technically known as English II. This instrument of instruction bears a considerable resemblance—if we ignore details—to a grind-stone, a clothes-wringer, and—to represent the nut-cracker—a pile-driver. Into its maw (also remotely reminiscent, it strikes me now, of a sheep-dip) he is gently but firmly urged along with five hundred or so other puzzled searchers after "sweetness and light". His ensuing sufferings, as we all know, are dire.

He asks for bread and is given Beowulf. None will deny the great historical importance and even intrinsic beauty of Anglo-Saxon literature. But the youth I am describing has absolutely no conception of the historical point of view, and he cannot read Anglo-Saxon. A dirty, torn, scribbled-over, Cook and Tinker translation is not much of a substitute for the original. He had come expecting to find literature the joyous or stirring symphony he had conceived it, but deeper of tone and more varied in execution; in bewildered dismay he finds it metamorphosed into something hideous and grating and thoroughly incomprehensible. He is rendered abjectly miserable by the contrast of his ignorance to the massive erudition seemingly expected of him; unable to form any cogent picture of the periods described from the few pitiful selections he has time to read, he is tormented with a mad sense of incompleteness; and pestered with conference, particularly horrible to him in his inexperience, conducted in chilly rooms by snobbish graduate students, life becomes a dreary burden. Thus the first few months are a nightmare of 'Beowulf', 'The Lament of Deor', 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', 'The Battle of Brunanburgh', 'The Pearl', 'Gewaine and the Greene Knight', as misrepresented through the blurry refraction of translations. Finally, the climax comes when he is introduced to Chaucer, whom,—if he has had any conception of him at all,—he has dreamed of as the most cheery, melodious, and charming of English poets. And he is expected to confirm this conception through the insipidity of a modernization, or the seeming harshness and nerve-racking obscurity of the original. It is no wonder, with the evidence of his own senses palpably before him, that he sets down the poet who is probably the richest in humanity, as dull, dry, and uninteresting.

The virus has done its work. Henceforward he looks upon his reading with impatience and ennui. Disillusioned and alienated, it seems to him no more than a hateful task to be performed perfunctorily for the sake of the paltry conferences. Marlowe, Shakespeare, Spenser and Milton, at the best difficult without literary training, all seem to him in his morbid state of resentment, equally detestable. Then, to add to his prejudice, he is brought to the eighteenth century, which, without a broad grasp of its historical importance and a wide knowledge of its manners and absorbing minutiae, is the dullest in the history of literature, and which is rendered all the duller to him by the paucity of the selections from it which the exigency of the course can permit. Finally, when he reaches the nineteenth century, a period in which he might naturally expect to find enjoyment unmarred by the archaic or obsolete, the year is far advanced, other work is very pressing, his enthusiasm for English has entirely evaporated, the hebetude generated by the course has become insurmountable, with the result that this period, too, is hurriedly and unappreciatively skimmed. The splendid closing years of the century, the most attractive from a purely literary point of view, enriched as they are with the great figures of Ruskin, Pater, Rossetti, Morris, Swinburne, Hardy, Meredith, and Stevenson, are all but

ignored in the hurry of bringing the course to a conclusion in time for the spring examinations.

Thus, a dismal failure, the course ends. Neither of its aims has been achieved. Its principal purpose—that of creating a sense of historical proportion in the mind of the student—has defeated itself, because in the professors' own mind's historical proportion is hopelessly confused with chronology; its other purpose—always secondary to the academician—that of awakening and stimulating a sound appreciation of literature—has not only proved abortive, but,—such was the atrabilious gloom of the course, has resulted in the complete atrophy of what little there already existed. Filled with a virus rendering all literature repellent, the students scatter to follow various academic careers, so that for the next three or four years, occupied with other studies and with this brooding horror behind them, they neglect their birthright as a worthless mess of pottage. And it is only through the broadening effect of other intellectual pursuits that they gradually come to see literature in a true light. In the meantime, some of the best and most leisured years of life have been empty of one of the keenest pleasures granted to educated minds.

The whole situation arises from a strict adherence to a narrow point of view. Without taking into account the insufficiency or rather the entire lack of literary training in the secondary schools, it is expected that the student, who arrives knowing exactly nothing, will adopt in a twinkling the critical attitude of trained academicians. One might as well expect a child to study theology before he has conned his alphabet. Instead of fostering the innate instinct for the beautiful just awakening into conscious perception, it is judged more important to load the student's mind with facts—too diffuse to be more than chronological—which, because unconnected with anything he can appreciate, are meaningless and soon forgotten. Feeling that the historical perspective must be obtained at all costs, and apparently labouring under the delusion that the professorial overlords plunge their totally unprepared victim at once into that period of English study requiring the most literary background and scholarly ardour.

The remedy is perfectly obvious. Why not teach the subject backwards? How absurd it is to maintain that because the student has received a few mistaken impressions of the Anglo-Saxon period, he will understand the last half of the nineteenth century any more clearly! It is ridiculous to pretend that in a course as superficial as this one must necessarily be, it is possible to convey even the vaguest notion of the literary movements and revolutions which produced and were produced by the great writers of the past. Such a course would not and cannot hope to do more than arouse interest and furnish a bibliographical foundation. And as I have shown it fails to do either. But if the course began with the expositions of the brilliant poets and novelists and essayists of modern times instead of the anonymous bones of the archaic past, the student would be introduced at once into the great world of light and life—not imprisoned in the dusty cupboard of erudite research. In the

dull, hard grind of the first year, English would become a pleasant relaxation,

"Annihilating all that's made  
To a green thought in a green shade."

Thus the most leisured period of the year could be devoted to a calm, unhurried examination under critical guidance of that period in our literature which is after all of the most vital interest to the intelligent man of to-day, and, as the year declines, less and less time need be devoted to periods which, whatever their value in the eyes of the literary pundit, are actually of small importance to one whose life will be too filled with professional or business pursuits to permit elaborate scholarship in this particular. Nevertheless, there is no reason why the salient features of English literary history should not be as effectively portrayed by this retrogressive method as by the progressive one. It should, as a matter of fact, prove more effective, for it is not generally realized what an immense expansion in mental outlook is brought about by the first year at college. Now retrogression would take advantage of this. Commencing with enthusiasm, and proceeding with alertness and curiosity, the student, becoming ever more and more emancipated from the pedagogical leading-strings, and adopting in their place the unprejudiced intellectual attitude of the educated man, becomes increasingly more capable of examining the masterpieces of the past with interest and pleasure, and of ap-

preciating at the same time their relative positions in the literary cosmos.

Indirectly, this method would have another advantage. Kindred to English II is a certain other horror known as English I, where an attempt is made to teach English composition. Now it is an axiom that a decent prose style cannot be taught; it must be acquired. The only method of acquiring it, if not precisely that of the 'sedulous ape', is by becoming acquainted with the supreme wordmasters of the past. Now it cannot be doubted but that the leisured reading of selections from the nineteenth century prose—men in the early part of the session, would, by stimulating the desire to write and in furnishing examples of excellence, have a beneficial effect upon the quality of composition submitted during the rest of the year. In this way a great stride would be taken towards the goal of education—namely, the proper inculcation of the principals of reading and writing.

Greatest of all benefits conferred, however, would be the condition of our entrant under such idyllic circumstances. At once that familiar glowering countenance of his would be wreathed in beatific smiles; his corrugated brow would shine forth smooth as alabaster; and his melancholy eye would become

"A burning and a shining light  
To a' this place."

## POEMS

### *Thaw*

With this season put aside  
Winter's garment; every pride  
Of the body has been lost  
Under censorship of frost,  
And the soul's bewilderment  
Has grown still and diffident.  
Let us dissipate with laughter  
Sorrow from the mind's domed rafter.

Lest a man recall the keen  
Crocus thrust which he has seen;  
Lest he recollect the shudder  
Of the bursting alder shoot,  
Blur his memory with the root  
Of thawed nightshade; lightly cover  
With your snow a weed's rebirth—  
You may not restrain his mirth.

... Shall a man lie underground  
With no syllable, no sound  
Falling from his quilted lip—  
Shall he not resent the drip  
Of snow water through the dark  
With some bellicose remark?

Leo Kennedy.

### *Falstaff*

In these prosaic days when lovers ask  
Permission for their suit from ministers,  
It is to Falstaff, loosest of bachelors,  
That I lift up this ischiadic flask,  
Regretting only that I have no cask  
Wherefrom replenishment might further course:  
"Here was warm flesh, and much of it, my Sirs,  
Here was a wight in whom a wench might bask!"

Who left his fire and sack and went to woo  
Gay wives innumerable? Who, one dark  
Night for the sake of Venus did endue  
Himself with buck's horns in old Windsor Park?  
Falstaff it was, none other; Falstaff, who,  
For love's sake, raised a ditch's watermark!

### *Orders*

Muffle the wind;  
Silence the clock;  
Muzzle the mice;  
Curb the small talk;  
Cure the hinge-squeak,  
Banish the thunder,  
Let me sit silent,  
Let me wonder...

Abraham M. Klein.

# TABULA RASA

*Senility-Puerility Get-Together:*—

Deans and doctors of philosophy at Defiance College are taking a liking for kiddie cars. The learned profs were victorious in a scooter race with students, staged as a feature of the first campus get-together of the season.

\* \* \*

*Courses in "It" at Ohio State University.*

*At Last It is Defined!*

Courses in charm are to be added to the curriculum offered Ohio University co-eds. The charm school, by lectures and demonstrations, will bring to women students information concerning the development of these charms table charm, conversational charm, physical charm, charm in dress, everyday charm and social charm.

\* \* \*

*Neo-Grecian Courses Added to University Curriculum:*—

Lectures will deal with ice cream formulas, ice cream testing, the handling of the raw cream, pasteurizing, standardizing, the preparation of mixes and the freezing of same, the packing and preparing of the finished product for market. Attention will be given both to plain creams and fancy products, such as fruit and nut creams, pudding, lacto, etc. The subjects dealt with in lectures will be demonstrated by ample laboratory practice. The theory and practice of milk condensing will be given consideration under this subject.

\* \* \*

*The Degree of B.V.D. is Established for the Benefit of Minnesota Knit-Wits:*—

Work is under way at the University of Minnesota to establish definite buying standards by which the public may be able to choose and buy clothing wisely, with regard to general economy, fit and style, according to Marion Weller, Associate Professor of Textiles and Clothing in the Division of Home Economics. In a letter to Roy A. Cheney, Executive Secretary of the Associated Knit Underwear Manufacturers of America, at Utica, N.Y., Prof. Weller says in part: "Have you any available information which will be of help in setting up for the consumer standards by which she may be able to choose and buy underwear wisely? Will it be possible for you to answer some of the questions that are constantly arising in regard to knit underwear?"

\* \* \*

*Cambridge Graduate and McGill Daily Reporter combine to produce the following:*—

The Christian life is unique, and one which is very easily attained to. All anyone has to do is through prayer and supplication to work himself up to a fit of frenzy, call upon the Lord, and the end is reached. Education and understanding did not figure in this conversion; the less

a person knows the easier it is for him to be saved. It does not make any difference to Mr. Hooker why anyone should receive salvation as long as he does so.

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*Ad. in Syracuse Daily Orange:*—

WARM STUDY ROOM, two connecting bedrooms. Simmon's beds. Two men \$6; 3 men \$8; 4 men \$10, 1015 E. Adams St.

\* \* \*

*New Social Scale established at the University of Missouri:*—

One lucky boy was assessed only eighty-five cents for the smallest girl at the penny-a-pound dance given by the Student Council last Saturday night. Another gave \$1.65 to admit his "heavy date". One co-ed said, "Dieting at least has its social advantages."

When one person tipped the scales at 200 pounds, he was allowed to enter the dance without charge, while a stag weighing 195 pounds had to pay the price of admission.

\* \* \*

*McGill Daily editorial rhapsodizes over breeding of freshmen:*—

At a house where a number of freshmen made their debut recently, it was remarked that one of the men who appeared, adhered to all the common rules of politeness more closely than any of the others.

How eloquently this spoke for the man! How much unconscious appeal and force emanates from such a person. One immediately imagines all sorts of delightful things about the mother who trained him; about his character and attitude toward life in general and about his future career.

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**NOTE:**—Recently Bertrand Russell, the great English liberal thinker, was scheduled to speak at the University of Wisconsin. On being asked for the use of the gymnasium so that one thousand persons could hear the speaker, the basket-ball coach refused, saying that he required it for basketball practice that evening. A writer in the "Capital Times" beautifully paraphrases his statement as follows:

If the five men on my squad, sir,  
Learn the tip-off and the passes,  
It is better far, by God, sir,  
Than to aid one thousand asses.  
For my basket quint will hustle,  
Bring renown to Alma Mater,  
While the thousand who hear Russell  
Soak up nonsense like a blotter.  
Can this fellow toss a ball, sir?  
Can he pivot, can he dribble?  
No? Good day, then. That is all, sir!  
Bertrand Russell? Ish kabibble!

# On the Importance of Logic

C. W. Hendel

**H**ERE ARE more things in our philosophy than the rebuking poets suspect. They have, for one thing, greatly misprised Logic. With all their power of intuition they have missed the quality of beauty and significance in thought when it is going true to itself and to the nature of things. They have conceived of Logic only as a pedantry of rules, or as a restraint upon fancy: the necessities of reason seem purely coercive and joyless things, inimical to the winged spontaneities of creative genius.

The poets' sentiments echo in all of us. In our hearts we tend to disparage logic. This is a little inconvenient to admit publicly, for there are always watchful persons around who will make too much capital of any open profession of that sort. These individuals, by the way, are the very ones who most hurt logic's repute in the eyes of men,—these professed logicians and guardians of the public mentality. Scarcely anyone can escape the experience, in this world of men, of being held to strict account by a troublesome fellow who talks about our "not sticking to logic." He is the kind who insists that we must follow the argument of our own words, the thoughts to which *they* commit us. And we, since we do intend to convey sense and not nonsense, feel an obligation to adhere to the meaning of our verbal utterance. Yet this is often awkward and really false to our intention. What *we* mean is not what our words mean, and we find ourselves forced to commit ourselves to ideas that are concluded only from the accidents of imperfect speech. No one likes to be compelled to opinions by anything that seems external—and logic far too often appears in that guise of being a necessity of our words rather than of our own reason or mind. The logicians and pedants who get us into such predicaments are therefore unwelcome figures in our social landscape. They frequently practice their game of mental accounting in the company of other people where they may indulge their chilish desire to exhibit their superiority and win a victory of word-wit. Even when they are just quietly critical, showing, as we say, a "logical mind," even then they take the joy out of our social intercourse. Their making us so conscious of propriety in language, and so attentive to logical consistency stifles in us all impulse to give that dramatic beginning and middle and end to our thoughts which makes them the personal expression of our sense of life and values. The laws of poesy have a right in conversation as well as the laws of logic. It is very imperfect communication of one person with another when the careless rapture of poetry is disallowed by an ever-measuring, censorious reason. Feeling this we resent the presence of the logician who has an interest only in thought's being square with itself, and none in its disclosure of personality. This aversion we have come to feel about logic itself. Let anyone speak well of poetic imagination and we turn gladly to him believing him to be in an affirmative mood;

let him mention logic with praise and we want to hear no more, fearing negative suggestions and some unwelcome application of that gloomy science of verbal proprieties.

There are, as a popular philosopher suggests, "fine mansions of philosophy"; but that of logic, with all its straightness, and severity of line, and measured economy of spaces, is not congenial to our taste. No one cares to live in it. However, we cheerfully recommend it to others, when we see the mote in their mind's eye. Logic is a good house of correction, a place good for other persons, like most disciplines. The sole value recognized in it then, is that it corrects, strengthens, and subdues and drills the mind. Logic applies the rule and the rod to men's thoughts. But it itself engenders no thoughts, nor any new visions. It is not associated, in our tradition, with thinking as a *fine art*.

Now Philosophy has always believed in Logic, as profoundly as in herself. Of course the philosophers individually have railed a-plenty against formal logic since the beginning of history. The contemporary writers who say we do not think in syllogism are not so modern as they fancy—the same was said by Aristotle who developed the theory and practice of syllogistic reasoning. The first writers in modern philosophy, Francis Bacon and Descartes, repeated the charge made by the Greeks, and we go on repeating it as if we were telling something new. Old Socrates, and Plato and Aristotle fought hard against a vile thing called 'logistic'—and that is the same thing for which we have developed so set an aversion today. No thinker tolerates chaining the mind to the mere words by which it expresses its meaning; everyone clamors for a release of the imagination. Yet, in doing so, the masters of philosophy have never once abandoned logic, as if it were contrary to this liberation of thought. They have invariably set out, every time they repudiated formalisms and restraints, to exalt some new method of reasoning; they wanted new organs for old,—but organs still, that is, Logic.

Those who read deeply the words and the lives of wise philosophers will learn, indeed, that logic is in very truth their most cherished art and possession. Logic is to the philosopher what the sonnet is to the poet. The economy of language, the rigor of the form, the great concentration of thought constitute a challenge to which the mind of every genius arises. Such an one considers that unless his reflections and views have, at some place, a severely rational ordering and formulation, he is not whole and sound in thought, and not in possession of the truth. He seeks the logical form because he prizes truth more than rhetoric or persuasion. His mind does not fret over that confinement, nor does it feel itself restricted to narrow convent walls. Through his logical thinking there comes intelligence of whole orders of experience unthought-of before, precisely as the fourteen lines will open to the poet a magic case-

ment on some vista of the human soul or beauty of nature. Logic is the way which the mind of a reflective thinker takes to win an imagination of new possibilities of human experience. It is an avenue to the discovery of a new world. This the philosophers would celebrate in verse, if they had the power and gifts, but it must remain unsung and almost unknown because those who have such arts and graces quite ignore this art of thought.

The veritable triumphs of logic are not in the public eye. They are rarely on record in any argument in print, and almost never in forays of social wit in conversation. They occur in those sessions of silent thought that precede the finding of new visions that afterward call for a life-time of labor to delineate. They come in the critical moment in a genius' career when all that is dimly forecast is gathered into the logical focus in order to be thrown out as a beam of illumination upon the whole world.

An example may be ventured, of the many that are to be found in the annals of philosophy. It is from the thought of David Hume. When he was a very young man he suffered from religious tribulations which he could only meet by earnest reasoning. "It began", as he said to a friend "with an anxious search after arguments to confirm the common opinion; doubts stole in, dissipated, returned; were again dissipated, returned again; and it was a perpetual struggle of a restless imagination against inclination, perhaps against reason." This restlessness of mind was due to wide reading in pagan and religious literature, and in the ancients and moderns. The "common opinion" was that God must exist, as the First Cause of the Universe, and as a Supreme Mind. From one source or another Hume had caught sight of the possibility that Nature might be altogether ordered from within, and that it was which made him dubious of the notion that God must exist as the outside Cause. He had a conception of Nature's origin and process as being something more marvellous than human mechanics, and consequently, he saw less value in a God whose relation to the world was only the mechanical one popularised in Eighteenth Century Deism. Nature with her internal order and workings seemed a better thing than such an external Deity. And then, too, from readings in certain religious philosophers, who had reflected soberly upon the limitations of the human mind in knowledge, Hume appreciated that the self or soul is one of the least-known things in our experience, and so he came to doubt whether our understanding of God is much advanced through conceiving of Him as merely a Mind. Hume expected to get a better idea of God than what was then accepted,—a dangerous expectation to publish at a time when theology claimed itself fully competent to give men a true knowledge of God, and of his relations to man and the world. However, his challenge was directed solely to the philosophers. It was they who professed to have logical demonstrations for the existence of such an externalised God. They pretended to give arguments absolutely cogent and decisive, so that the mind is forced to their deistic conclusion. Hume went straight for those arguments. With the acumen and infinite pertinacity of genius, he put them to the test by asking endless questions until his own mind was logically satisfied.

What proof is there for a Supreme Mind and Cause of the World? The answer of a host of philosophers who were agreed on this point was as follows: There *must* be a cause for everything that exists. It is an absolute necessity. And so the world needs a First Cause. Moreover, the fittest cause for a world which contains beings of mind is a Being who is Himself Mind in a perfect and supreme degree. But why, Hume asked in his imaginary dialogue with the philosophers, why *is* a Cause Always Necessary? The rest may follow if this is true. But is this an imperative necessity of reason, that everything in or out of Nature shall have a cause for its existence? Would not Nature do by herself without anything beyond her? No, the answer came, this would never do, in any case. A cause for every existing thing without exception is *logically* necessary. And there are proofs for this proposition.

Hume examined these logical proofs very carefully, for he was determined to be convinced only by reasons that he could clearly see for himself and not by the mere form of words. The proofs were all done in the manner of Euclid when no direct demonstration was possible: the contrary of proposition to be proved is supposed to be true; it proves itself contradictory and absurd; and so the mind is compelled to abandon it and come back to the original proposition, which thus is established because everything else goes to pieces. Everything in the proof, then, depends upon the absurdity of the contrary views. If they did not turn out to be really absurd, the original view would be unproved. It is a strange way to truth when we have to see clearly not the truth itself but the absurdity of its opposite. A philosopher is bound to be discontented with such logic.

But on to the proofs. The first one was this: If anything were ever to exist *without a cause*, then *it itself* would be *its own cause*. It would produce itself. But this seems absurd. And since the idea of a self-causing reality is absurd, we must conclude that every thing which exists must have a cause *distinct from itself*.

Another proof on the books was as follows: If anything ever were to exist without a cause, then it would be produced by nothing, that is, it would have *Nothing for its cause*,—but Nothing is no positive reality and the thought of its causing something is utterly absurd. Again we are forced to think that there simply must be *something* positive and distinct from the thing itself which will cause it to come into existence. So it is always necessary to think of a cause.

Here it was that Hume's superiority as a philosopher showed itself. When all the language of men and all their habits and prejudices of thought tended to fool them, he kept his mind fixed steadily on the idea instead of the words. He kept his grip on the point at issue. And his master-stroke was not a counter-argument, but a quiet, searching scrutiny of those so-called absurdities. He still wanted to know something—how they happened to be absurd. The spirit of the scientist dwelt in him—he tried to explain these things which all the other philosophers had too hastily accepted at their face-value. His was the finer logic of science which makes what had once seemed impossible and

inconceivable thoroughly reasonable in the light of a new vision of the situation.

Those philosophers who were so sure about the principle of cause had professed to be honestly experimenting with the contrary type of situation where something is imagined to come into existence without any cause. They gave the impression that they were trying out fairly the alternative notions and that they were only following the logic in each case. But Hume perceived that they had spoiled their own experiments. The new proposal to be tested was that there is *no cause of any description* in the affair. But what had they done? No sooner had they excluded a cause than they imagined either the *thing itself or Nothing to be a cause*. They had ceremoniously ushered cause out of the front door but surreptitiously reintroduced cause by the back door. They simply could not do without a cause. The habit was so strong upon them that they were bound to have some cause or other figuring in the argument, logic or no logic. The image was in their minds all the while, so that the moment they debarred a cause distinct from the thing itself, they imagined the thing itself or nothing in the place of the missing entity. All the absurdity was thus of their own making. By injecting causes when they pretended to exclude every thought of cause they had "faked the experiment" and so proved nothing at all. It was still possible that a being might exist without a cause for its existence. All the so-called demonstrations against that possibility proved nothing but the inveteracy of the habit of thinking causes, and the obstinacy of the human mind in doing so.

Thus Hume showed that the logician's proofs for causality were not logical as had been pretended. It was hard for his contemporaries to appreciate *his* logic as the better. What is the sense of trying to think of things without causes? What is the point of throwing down arguments which aim to prove the causal principles? It all seemed mere wantonness of intellect, trifling with the ordinarily accepted notions. Far better drop all logic and stay by common sense which believed in causes without abstract reasoning. There was a prejudice against "mere logic" and even against the attitude of inquiry. To ask questions about a belief is but a step to *denying* the belief. And when men live in an atmosphere of prejudice and passion they cannot help regarding the dispassionate man, who is only seeking to understand, as a person animated by a negative passion to deny their beliefs,—because he is not impassioned for the common opinion, he is *against* it. Actually Hume never denied the existence of cause. Nor did he deny the existence of mind or God. He had simply questioned the logic of the arguments used by others to prove these beliefs. And he had done so because he had vision—he saw that the possibilities ruled out by the older thinkers with *their* logic were significant for a new view of the Universe. He cleared away the obstacles to this vision, but he had to do it by *his* logic.

We can see nowadays who were the denying spirits in that age. Those logicians who fought down by demonstrative reasons the notion that there *could* be anything *besides* the mechanical cause, they were the negators. They kept the mind shut to an interpretation of Nature which the world

was to make in the centuries after them. Hume, on the other hand, was appreciative of the view of Nature organised from within. He was in friendly relations with Buffon, Diderot, and others of the circle of the *Encyclopédie* in France, who were hinting at the process of evolution in living matter. It was his crime, then, to shatter the false logic which forbade the mind of man to entertain any other conception of processes in Nature than that of mechanics. His reasoning banished the negative dogmatism which stood in the way of the coming sciences of life. Hume's logic cleared that way and liberated the mind to new concepts of Nature.

But other sciences were favored in this checking of the arrogance of materialism. When Hume noticed the role of habit in our thought of causality, that is, how set and determined the mind seems to be to have some cause or other, he became interested in these habitual and instinctive tendencies throughout the realm of experience. He wrote all his books about Human Nature. And he noticed how many such necessities of nature, not of logic, there are in both knowledge and conduct. This was in itself the beginning of a science of man, and with us it is the science of psychology, stressing the peculiarity of the human being's processes and actions. Psychology is something other than biology or physics. And Hume's logic helped make it so.

Science in general has profited. Hume declared that the habit of thinking in terms of cause is only a natural "presumption of the mind" and suggested other such presumptions, that is, other possible ways of dealing with the material of experience. He pointed out clearly, and he was the first philosopher to do so, that whenever we argue at all from our past experience, when we think inductively, we are *assuming* without any proof the Uniformity of Nature. Did he on that account repudiate all reasoning from experience? No, he even ventured to treat history and the social sciences as *bona fide* sciences, although they more than any others have to interpret material that cannot be experimented with as in the physical sciences. Hume really taught, therefore, that the human mind gets all its knowledge by the help of such 'postulates' like this one of nature's regularity and consistency. His reasoning suggests the view that there will be valid science wherever the human mind has the aptitude to choose significant postulates and to utilize them for the marshalling and ordering of the data of experience. In one aspect of things, one set of ideas is properly axiomatic; in other aspects, we must be prepared to find other axioms pertinent. Here mechanism is relevant, there, perhaps, teleology. In any case, the outcome of the logic of Hume is to make all knowledge dependent upon the axioms and postulates. Hence there is no reason to suppose that mankind in its brief history has happily hit upon the only possible ways of knowing. No ventures in understanding according to new ideas can ever be ruled out "logically". Logic is not meant for ruling-out but for destroying precisely such dogmatic exclusions and blinding prejudices. It is intended to keep the mind generous about ideas. And so it encourages the attitude of always looking for better hypotheses and more relevant facts,

# In Praise of Illusions

By J. A. Edmison

"Dear Recent Graduate: How long will it be before you become a Babbitt?"—such was the rather ominous message that several of us received from the League for Industrial Democracy shortly after we had finished toiling in the academic galleys of the Faculty of Arts. How contemptuously we viewed this at the time. *Babbittism!* ! Ugh —what sophisticated 100% college graduate would ever become so thoroughly mired in blatant Idealism and superficiality? Shades of Kiwanis and Edgar A. Guest and the Saturday Evening Post and William Jennings Bryan! Oh no—we had relegated all such things to the intellectual ash can by the time we had written off our last second year supplemental.

How secure we fancied ourselves in our new self-sufficiency! We considered ourselves mentally emancipated, freed from the Bastille of convention and tradition. It gave one a smug feeling of superiority... Pity those other poor people, blind as yet to things as they *really* are. They read the newspapers and actually believe them. How absurd! Newspapers are filled with propaganda and do not give honest opinions. Upton Sinclair has told us so and he is an honourable man... The masses, morons that they are, believe in God and a future life and other old-fashioned things. How ridiculous! Clarence Darrow and E. Haldeman-Julius say that there is no God and that dead men rise up never, and they should know... The common folk, (it is pitiful, really) still dream of Romance, and fall in love, and gape at the moon and warble sweet platitudes. Incredible, when you come to think of it. Professor Freud has given us the "low-down" on love, doctors say osculation is unhealthy and astronomers declare the moon to be a dead thing. Hence "*much ado about nothing*". . . The sporting public, deluded souls, yell like cannibals when a goal is scored or a drop kicked. They won't believe that all amateurs are paid and that all 'pro' games are 'fixed.'

We have this on authority. Good authority? Well, we know it is so anyway.

Then it came about that we were moved with compassion. . . How can we save the lost mortals out there crying in the intellectual wilderness? How best can we make them realize that things are *not* as they seem, that there are no honest politicians, that religion is the bunk, that marriage is a joke, that Optimism and Service and Cheerfulness are frothy nothings, that there is no God in any Heaven and that all is not well with the world? A formidable programme, it is true—but Don Quixote-like we were ready to face it. Would that we could give them the True Faith; just as we had received it from holy sweet communion with Nietzsche, H. L. Mencken and Sinclair Lewis!

Then came the dawn! This new credo was not so satisfying after all. While a temporary narcotic for the ego, it was not stable, substantial or lasting. It had torn down much and built up nothing. It had deprived us of our faith in Providence, our trust in man, and our interest in human institutions. *Faith, trust, interest*,—intangible qualities these—whose value, like that of good health and friendship, we do not appreciate until they are lost.

Why not then have a few dreams and pleasing illusions? 'Ask the man who owns one', 'No home should be without them'. They are efficient gloom-chasers, they lower the suicide rate and greatly aid the holy cause of matrimony. Let the children have their Santa Claus; 'Billy Sunday', his Genesis; Lothrop Stoddard, his Nordic theory; J. S. Ewart K.C., his Canadian Republic; and McGill students, their vision of a college gymnasium. Let young men's fancies lightly turn to thoughts of love. Let every goose be a swan and every lass a queen. For verily I say unto you, one is happier as a doorman in the House of Babbitt than as a throne occupant in the palace of the "Debunkers"!

## The Importance of Logic

the attitude of true experiment. It is no error of modern science that it looks back to Hume as to a congenial spirit.

Even in speculative philosophy Hume's logic has made for freedom rather than restraint of thought. He said himself that the ancient maxim *Ex nihilo, nihil fit* was no longer an incubus on the mind. It had hampered theology, for it ruled out the possibility of a creation of matter out of nothing. It also compelled men to think of all the living processes as mechanistic. But life, we have come more and more to realise, is the creation of qualities and natures which had no existence before in the conditions of living matter. Evolution means to us the appearance of forms of life from lower forms less complete and perfect. It is, in fact, "something coming from nothing." The philosophers are now agreed upon this way of viewing it, though they differ in their descriptions, some preferring to think of an Emer-

gent Evolution, others of a Creative Evolution. Today, however, the point of departure for all alike is the maxim that something does in very truth come into existence from nothing, one of the cases which the philosophers prior to Hume thought obviously absurd of course many factors have brought about this viewpoint of the present age; but among them we must certainly count the price of reasoning by which Hume showed that it is not absurd and ought not to be excluded from our thinking.

In such logic, then you find the philosopher at his best. He is working for open-mindedness. He holds not to words but to some idea which promises a new intelligence of things. His reasoning is for the sake of that new order, and it is not against anything but false reasons on behalf of the old order. Thus logic is part and parcel of a fine imagination which discerns from afar the possibilities of the future and uses reason to justify them against prejudices of the present day.